

Message Text

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ACTION CU-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 USIA-12 /027 W

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R 260740Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8351

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 8133

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, IR, PINT, SHUM, SCUL

SUBJ: GOI RESTRICTIONS ON EMIGRATION

REF: STATE 204, TEHRAN 1464

1. EMBASSY OF COURSE AWARE OF GOI STATEMENTS REGARDING PROPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON DEPARTURE FROM IRAN OF EDUCATED AND TRAINED IRANIANS. FOR EXAMPLE, SEPT 4 ISSUE OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILY, KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL, CARRIES TEXT OF SHAH'S SPEECH AT RAMSAR EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, DURING WHICH HE NOTED, INTER ALIA, THAT IRAN WILL NOT SERVE "AS A FACTORY FOR TURNING OUT DOCTORS FOR EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES...", AND THAT THOSE WHO ARE EDUCATED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE "WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY BEFORE THEIR CONTRACTS EXPIRE UNLESS THEY OBTAIN SPECIAL PERMITS."

2. FURTHER, TEHRAN REFTEL INDICATED THAT AT LEAST AS EARLY AS FEBRUARY, GOI WAS PLANNING STEPS TO HALT BRAIN DRAIN FROM IRAN TO US AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

3. HOWEVER, IRANIAN MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION HAVE RESPONDED TO EMBASSY QUERIES ON THIS MATTER WITH ASSERTIONS THAT NO RESTRICTIVE MEASURES ARE AS YET IN FORCE.

4. SINCE GOI PRONOUNCEMENTS CLEARLY FAVOR RESTRICTIVE POLICY, IT IS REASONABLE TO PRESUME THAT IMPLEMENTING MEASURES ARE STILL BEING FORMULATED BY SLOW-MOVING IRANIAN BUREAUCRACY. PENDING ADOPTION THOSE MEASURES, IRANIAN OFFICIALS MAY CONTINUE TO RENDER DISCRETIONARY DECISIONS IN INDIVIDUAL CASES SUCH AS CITED IN PARA ONE STATE REFTEL. RESTRICTIONS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE INTENSIFIED

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AFTER IMPLEMENTING MEASURES ARE DECREED. EMBASSY AGREES THAT UN-

FAVORABLE PUBLICITY WILL LIKELY RESULT, BUT SEES NO POSSIBILITY
OF INFLUENCING GOI TO DROP THIS POLICY.

5. FYI: ALTHOUGH EXIT VISA REFUSAL IN CASE OF MOHAMMAD GHAZI ASHAR
HAVE BEEN DUE TO REASON CITED STATE REFTEL, IT IS EQUALLY POSSIBLE
THAT HE FAILED TO FULFILL NORMAL LONG-STANDING REQUIREMENT FOR
STUDENT EXIT VISAS. GOI OFFICIAL, WHO DOUBTED THAT ASHAR WAS
REFUSED BECAUSE OF HIS EDUCATIONAL STATUS, OPINED THAT HE MAY NOT
HAVE SATISFIED REGULATION THAT IRANIAN STUDENTS ABROAD HAVE THEIR
EDUCATIONAL STATUS CHECKED AND CERTIFIED BY IRANIAN EMBASSY OR
CONSULATE PRIOR TO RETURN TO IRAN. THIS GOI REQUIREMENT EXISTS TO
ASSURE BONA FIDES OF STUDENT FOR TEMPORARY EXEMPTION MILITARY
SERVICE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EDUCATION, POLICIES, STUDENTS, GOVERNMENT GRANTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TEHRAN08133
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740271-0492
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740910/aaaaaiaw.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 204, TEHRAN 1464
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 AUG 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOI RESTRICTIONS ON EMIGRATION
TAGS: CVIS, PINT, SHUM, SCUL, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005